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WEDNESDAY,  
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## Retirement open house for MSD bus driver Judy Decker planned

In celebration of retiring MSD bus driver Judy Decker's 47 years of service, a retirement open house will be held for her from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 15 in the Southwood Jr/Sr High School cafeteria, 564 Indiana 124. The public is invited to attend especially those who had Judy as a driver during their school years.

## City's Hoosier Homes Program event postponed

The city's Hoosier Homes Program event, which had been

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## One-on-one with Holcomb



Photo by Rob Burgess / Plain Dealer

On Thursday, Gov. Eric Holcomb sat down for an exclusive interview with the Plain Dealer at the governor's office at the Indiana Statehouse.

In an exclusive interview, the governor discusses vaccines, teacher pay, redistricting, cannabis, more

By ROB BURGESS  
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

On Thursday, Gov. Eric Holcomb sat down for an exclusive interview with the Plain Dealer at the governor's office at the Indiana Statehouse.

During the end-of-year discussion, the governor answered questions about vaccine mandates, teacher salaries, the redistricting process, cannabis and more.

### Vaccine mandates

A federal judge on Tuesday, Dec. 7 blocked President Joe Biden's administration from enforcing a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for employees of federal contractors, the latest in a string of victories for Republican-led states pushing back against Biden's pandemic policies, according to the Associated Press.

The order came in response to a lawsuit from several contractors and seven states — Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, South Carolina, Utah and West Virginia. It applies across the U.S. because one of those challenging the order is the trade group Associated

Builders and Contractors Inc., whose members do business nationwide. A federal judge in Kentucky also had issued a preliminary injunction against the mandate the previous week, but it applied only to contractors in three states that had sued together — Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee.

Biden issued an executive order Sept. 9 requiring federal contractors and subcontractors to comply with workplace safety guidelines developed by a federal task force. That task force subsequently issued guidelines that new, renewed or extended contracts include a clause requiring employees to be fully vaccinated by Jan. 18. That meant those receiving a two-dose vaccine must get their second shot by Jan. 4.

Limited exceptions were allowed for medical or religious reasons. The requirements would apply to millions of employees of federal contractors, which include defense companies and airlines.

All three of Biden's broad vaccine mandates affecting the private sector have been put on hold by courts. Judges

already issued a stay regarding one that applies to businesses with 100 or more employees and another for health care workers across the U.S.

Separately, Biden has imposed vaccine requirements for employees of the federal government and the military.

"I believe the vaccine is the number one tool that will protect us and our loved ones against COVID-19. It is the tool that will end the pandemic. However, I strongly believe it's not the state or federal government's role to issue a vaccine mandate upon citizens and private businesses. This is the approach our administration has taken all along. The announcement from President Biden is a bridge too far. Private businesses should be able to look at their own mission, their staff and their goals and make the decision best for them that will keep their doors open," said Holcomb, in September. "I believe it is fundamentally a citizen's right to choose whether or not to get the vaccine. While I wish everyone would get the vaccine, we are a country built on this exact type of freedom."

On Thursday, Holcomb said these mandates were "not just unusual, but unprecedented."

"Never happened before where a federal government to any state has come in and said we're going to mandate this particular vaccine for your population in your state. Never happened in the state of Indiana where an executive did that either. We have a process to approve vaccines in the state of Indiana, but there is a process, there's no individual deciding to that when it comes to injecting something in your body," said Holcomb. "I think it's unconstitutional and, understandably, all three of those mandates put forward are tangled up in court proceedings."

Holcomb said he also objected to the "unintended consequences."

"Maybe on the margins it would help some, but it has also prompted many to say, 'If you're going to mandate, then I'm out,'" said Holcomb. "I as the chief executive for the state of Indiana with this administration we have to provide government services where if, like we're seeing in some other areas that they're doing this, local governments are doing this and firefighters and police are saying, 'If so, I'm out.' That degradation of

See HOLCOMB, page A3

## Multiple agencies respond to an injured Salamonie hiker Sunday

The subject fell down a ravine and was treated for a possible dislocated shoulder

By ROB BURGESS  
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

A report of an injured hiker Sunday afternoon prompted a response from several local police, fire and ambulance agencies.

The calls came in at around 4:30 p.m. in the area of Salamonie River State Forest.

"Someone was walking off-trail and fell down a ravine to (and had) a shoulder injury," said Upper Wabash Interpretive Services interpretive manager Teresa Rody.

In response to a Plain Dealer request Tuesday, Indiana State Police (ISP) Peru Post public information officer Sgt. Tony Slocum said they did not have any additional information to offer.

However, Wabash County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy J. Tyler Guenin said he had checked their logs "and it appears that multiple agencies responded due to having a difficult time initially finding the exact location of those in question."

Guenin said the injured subject had a possible dislocated shoulder.

"Once located, the injured party was medically treated," said Guenin.

Guenin said there was no crime or detailed information available concerning those involved.

"The end result was a medical call only," said Guenin.

No further information was available as of press time. This story will be updated as more information becomes available.

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at [rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com](mailto:rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com).

## Join Ernie Haase & Signature Sound for 'A Jazzy Little Christmas'

Southern gospel group to bring along three-piece jazz band to Wabash on Friday

By ROB BURGESS  
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

Southern gospel group Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, along with a three-piece jazz band, are set to bring "A Jazzy Little Christmas" to Wabash this weekend, just in time for the holidays.

"With four-part harmonies, the beloved songs of the season will remind listeners of the sounds of The Four Freshmen with the jazz of Tony Bennett," said Honeywell Arts & Entertainment



Provided photo

Southern gospel group Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, along with a three-piece jazz band, are set to bring "A Jazzy Little Christmas" to Wabash this weekend, just in time for the holidays.

ment public relations specialist Michele DeVinney.

The only change to the group is that Devin McGlamery left the group at the end of October to go

full-time with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Doug Anderson, a founding member of the group,

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## Santa's coming to town on board Trolley No. 85

The route will travel from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday through Wabash

### STAFF REPORT

Visit Wabash County has announced that Santa Claus is coming to town on board Trolley No. 85, according to marketing manager Whitney Millspaugh.

"To spread Christmas cheer around Wabash," Santa will be cruising through town from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19.

"Santa will be stopping at the North and South Poles — err ... fire stations — to collect Christmas wish list letters," said Millspaugh.

"Make sure to check out Santa's route to see if he'll

be driving by your house," said Millspaugh.

Santa and the Trolley will stop from 4:30 to 4:45 p.m. at the Wabash Fire Department — South station at 1470 Vernon St. and will end with a stop from 5:45 to 6 p.m. at the Wabash Fire Department — North station at 1000 N. Wabash St.

"Visit Wabash County started Santa Onboard Trolley No. 85 last year as a morale booster during a time when many spirits were low," said Visit Wabash County tourism manager Jennifer Long-Dillon.

"It was such a hit last year, that we decided to bring it back and incorporate stops at the fire stations. We hope you bring your kiddos out

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Paul Markiewicz  
Registered Principal



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Registered Representative

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# Indiana sees COVID-19 hospitalizations highest in nearly a year

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indiana’s COVID-19 hospitalizations have topped 3,000 people for the first time in nearly a year amid the state’s ongoing infection surge.

Indiana hospitals were treating 3,020 COVID-19 patients as of Monday, according to tracking by the state health department. That is up about 150 percent in the past five weeks and the most such patients

since just before Christmas Day last year.

About a quarter of those patients are in hospital intensive care units. The Indiana Hospital Association said last week that COVID-19 cases and other severe illnesses had given the state’s hospitals their highest-ever total patient counts.

Indiana is approaching its pandemic peak for COVID-19 hospitaliza-

tions when that number reached about 3,400 in early December last year.

State health officials have recorded nearly 18,200 confirmed or presumed COVID-19 deaths since March 2020. Indiana has been averaging about 35 COVID-19 deaths a day so far this month. That average has remained over 20 daily deaths since late August after falling below five a day in July.

## HAASE

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has returned to take McGlamery’s place. The current line-up is Ernie Haase, on tenor; Dustin Doyle, on lead; Doug Anderson, on baritone; and Paul Harkey, on bass. For the Christmas tour, they are traveling with a live band consisting of Tyler Vestal, on piano and keyboards; Wes Jones, on bass; and Andrew Goldman, on drums.

“Our Christmas tour has been fantastic. I just know Wabash is going to be stellar. I’ve got a lot of friends and family in that area,” said Haase, in a phone interview on Monday. “Wabash has got a lot of great memories for us. We’ve been there many times at the Honeywell Center. We’ve recorded two major videos there, full productions. So, we’ve just got a lot of friends and a lot of fans and we just can’t wait for them to see what new little wrinkles and old tried and true songs we have.”

The show is set to start at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17 at the Honeywell Center. Most seats are \$25 or \$35, with limited premium seating at \$75. Tickets are on sale now by calling 260-563-

1102 or online at [www.honeywellarts.org](http://www.honeywellarts.org).

Haase said growing up his home “was always full of vinyl.”

“My mom and dad were always listening to records,” said Haase. “There was a lot of Elvis, a lot of the Beatles, and a lot of gospel records. There was always harmony. There was always The Four Freshman, The Jordanaires, all those kinds of records that were in our house. I’m just always drawn to harmony, four-part male harmony.”

Haase said when he heard his first quartet it was a live performance by the Cathedrals, a gospel group.

“I knew then and there that it was going to be my lifelong ambition,” said Haase.

Haase said that ambition began to come true in April 1990 he received a call to join the Cathedrals. He said he toured with the group for the next decade, until they retired, at which point he started his group.

“I’ve been chasing that quartet harmony dream for 33 years now,” said Haase.

Haase said what audiences know and love about their live performances were they always bring “a lot of joy and energy and a lot of heart.”

Haase said for these

Christmas shows they had classics including “We Three Kings,” “Silent Night,” “Happy Holidays,” “Winter Wonderland” and “What Child Is This?”






“We bring the snow machines,” said Haase. “We’ve had 12 years of crafting this show and adding songs to it every year. It is definitely one of my ... and all our guy’s ... favorite shows that we do all year long.”

Haase said his advice to younger musicians was to be content where you are, but always stay hungry where you want to go.

“Especially with social media you can ... be in a good mood and then you see somebody is doing it bigger and better than me,” said Haase. “You need to be content with what God has given you and where you are in your process. And just love the process. But content doesn’t mean you don’t stay hungry and want to keep building, and growing. So that’s where I’m at. I’m 57. I’m content. I don’t want to trade places with anybody in this life. But I don’t want to lose my hunger and drive to make what I do better than it was the night before.”





*Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at [rburgess@wabashplainedealer.com](mailto:rburgess@wabashplainedealer.com).*

### 5-Day Weather Summary

 <b>Wednesday</b> Scattered Rain 59 / 52	 <b>Thursday</b> Showers Likely 60 / 32	 <b>Friday</b> Scattered Rain 47 / 41	 <b>Saturday</b> Rain Likely 45 / 26	 <b>Sunday</b> Partly Cloudy 39 / 27
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### Sun and Moon

Today's sunset ..... 5:20 p.m.  
Tomorrow's sunrise ..... 7:57 a.m.

 Full 12/18	 Last 12/26	 New 1/2	 First 1/9
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### Detailed Local Outlook

Today we will see mostly cloudy skies with a 45% chance of scattered rain, high temperature of 59°, humidity of 70%. South wind 10 to 17 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies tonight with a 40% chance of showers, overnight low of 52°. South wind 18 mph.

# Zoo’s 3 surviving penguins improve after deaths of 6 others

LAFAYETTE (AP) — A northwest Indiana zoo’s three surviving penguins are gaining weight and improving weeks after avian malaria killed the zoo’s six other penguins, officials said.

The three remaining penguins have “showed an increase in weight and activity,” Heather Woody, the Columbian Park Zoo’s head zoo keeper, told the Lafayette Parks and Recre-

ation Board.

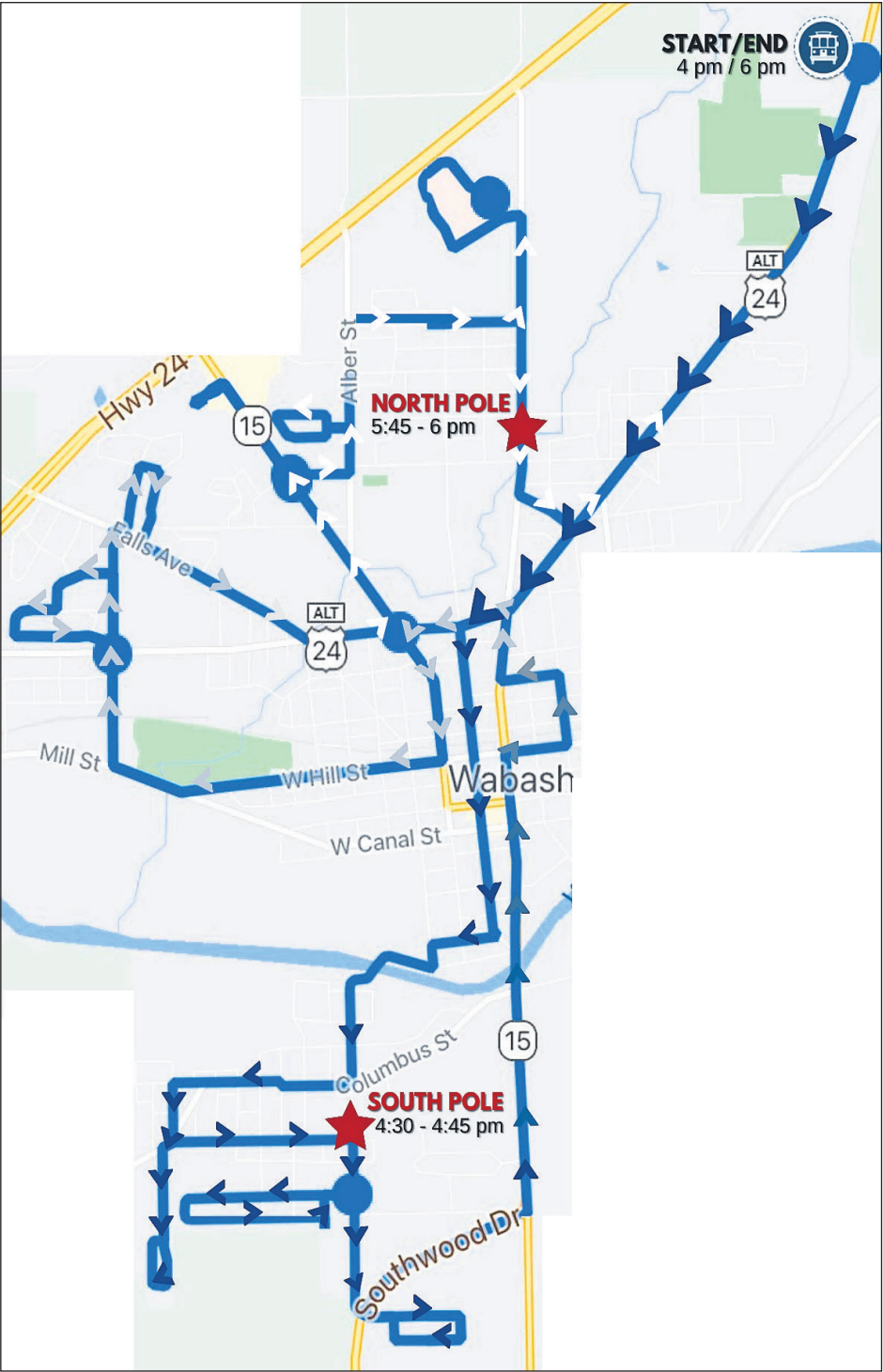
“We do have a long road ahead of us still, but we are hopeful,” Woody said Monday, adding that additional test results on the birds are pending.

The three penguins have also battled suspected avian malaria, believed to be what sickened the six birds that died in October and November despite around-the-clock care that included anti-malarial medications,

the Journal & Courier reported.

Officials are “very hopeful, but cautiously so” that the three surviving penguins will recover, said Samantha Haville, Lafayette Parks and Recreation’s marketing manager.

The penguins were part of the zoo’s Penguin Cove exhibit, which opened in July at the zoo in Lafayette, about 60 miles northwest of Indianapolis.



Provided graphic

Santa will be cruising through town from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19.

## TROLLEY

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to see Santa riding through town.”

Millspaugh said Visit Wa-

bash County would like to thank their sponsors including Crystal Glass & Exteriors, Wabash MPI Carver, Milliner Printing, Crossroads Bank and Duke Energy. They would also like

to thank J.M. Reynolds Oil Co. for being the official fuel provider for Trolley No. 85.

For more information, visit [VisitWabashCounty.com/trolley-tours](http://VisitWabashCounty.com/trolley-tours).

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## Wabash Plain Dealer

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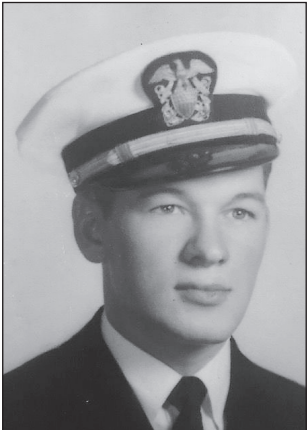
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# Obituaries

## Glen L Atkinson

Jan. 5, 1922 ~ Dec. 13, 2021



Glen L. Atkinson, 99, passed away at 4:15 am on Monday, December 13, 2021, at Peabody Retirement Community in North Manchester, Indiana.

He was born in Gas City, Indiana, on Thursday, January 5, 1922, to Lewis and Hazel (Mitchell) Atkinson. An avid athlete his entire life, Glen had the good fortune to be born into a baseball team consisting of his eight brothers and one sister. Glen graduated from Jonesboro High School. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1942 and served as a pilot on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific during World War II.

On December 22, 1945, he married Betty Boles, his love and devoted partner in life for over 47 years. Together they owned and operated Wabash Transfer for 20 years, raised 5 children, and completed numerous home renovations including the schoolhouse in Mt Etna.

After Betty’s death in 1993, Glen continued to work on various renova-

tion projects of his own and with his children, traveling between Indiana, Michigan, and Florida, eventually settling down on Lake Papakeechee. An avid golfer, Glen was a member of South Shore Golf Club for many years and from age 76, routinely shot his age or better into his 90s. He enjoyed spending time with other veterans and friends at the North Webster American Legion. He was a guest speaker at numerous schools and community events, recounting his

war experiences including the aerial search for Butch O’Hare, surviving a typhoon on an aircraft carrier, and losing two brothers in the war.

Hard working, humble, and always ready with a joke, Glen was universally well liked. In his later years, he was a favorite with other residents and the staff in his retirement community; a visit to Glen always meant a good story. Husband, father, grandfather, friend, war hero, storyteller – 23 days short of his 100th birthday, Glen’s absence leaves a gap that cannot be filled. He will be greatly missed.

Survivors include his son, Gregory Atkinson of Safety Harbor, FL; daughter, Ann Nichols of Paw Paw, MI; daughter, Tracy (David) Westervelt of Kalamazoo, MI; grandchildren, Max Atkinson, Amanda Atkinson, Andrew Atkinson, Toni Westervelt, Ethan (Emily) Westervelt, Kelly Westervelt, Alexander (Jessica)

Westervelt, Sherman Barker; and 16 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Betty Atkinson; son, Christopher Barker; son-in-law, Don Nichols; daughter-in-law, Mary Atkinson; eight brothers, Roy, Ralph, Gail, Guy, Carl, Beryl, Claude, and John; sister, Doris Rice; and grandsons, Glen Atkinson II and Coleman Barker.

The family will receive visitors from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm on Thursday, December 16, 2021, at Needham-Storey-Wampner Funeral Service, Storey Chapel, 400 E. Main St., Gas City, IN 46933.

Immediately following the time of visitation, a service to celebrate Glen’s life will begin at 1:00 pm with Pastor Mick Simpkins officiating. Burial will take place at Riverside Cemetery at a later date.

Memories may be shared online at [www.nswcares.com](http://www.nswcares.com).

## Joan Margaret (Blue) Simons

Feb. 6, 1932 – Dec. 11, 2021



Joan Margaret (Blue) Simons, 89, of Peru passed away at 5:35 AM, Saturday, Dec. 11, 2021 at Blair Ridge Health Campus. She was born on Feb. 6, 1932 in Oak Park, IL the daughter of Otto Greibling and Hanna Muller Hodgini. Joan married Max E. Simons and he preceded her in death on Aug. 12, 1999.

Joan was a 1949 graduate of Peru High School and a retired Customer Service Representative for General Telephone. Her greatest joys in life were her family and her Roman Catholic faith where she was regular at weekly mass. She loved her family unconditionally and always made everyone she came in contact with feel extra special. Joan put forth extra effort to make every holiday unique for her grandchildren. She was an avid bridge player and in her younger days she was a bare back rider for Ringling Brothers Circus.

She is survived by her son Scott Blue of Bowling Green, FL; daughters Connie Casale and her husband Michael of Williamsport, PA, JoEllen Blue Peru, Susan Knisley and her husband Randy of Columbia City, IN and Allison Hass and her husband Fred of Albion, IN; daughters-in-law Luann Wendel Blue of North Manchester, IN and Peggy

Blue of Goshen, IN; a son-in-law Michael Caley of Fort Wayne, IN; 14 grandchildren; 12 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Max, sons William Max Blue and Max David Blue and a daughter Carol Ann Caley.

A service celebrating the life of Joan Margaret Simons will be held at 10:30 AM, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021 at St. Charles Catholic Church, 58 W. 5th St., Peru. Family and friends will gather from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the Eikenberry-Eddy Funeral Home, 84 W. Main St., Peru. There will be a prayer service at 8:00 PM, Friday at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations will be made to St. Charles Catholic Church.

## Kathy Lynn ‘Momma’ Miller

Kathy Lynn “Momma” Miller passed away Dec. 11, 2021.

Funeral services will be at 10:00 a.m., Dec. 17, 2021, at McDonald Funeral Homes, Wabash, Indiana 46992. Burial will follow at Gardens of

Memory Cemetery.

Visitation will from 4-7 p.m. Dec. 16, 2021, at the funeral home.

Online condolences may be directed to the family at [www.mcdonaldfunerals.com](http://www.mcdonaldfunerals.com).

## Ellen Mason (Custer) Ragan

Aug. 10, 1964 – Dec. 12, 2021

Ellen Mason (Custer) Ragan, 57, North Manchester, IN, died Dec. 12, 2021, at home.

She was born Aug. 10, 1964, in Huntington, Indiana.

Survivors include husband, Robert Daniel “Randy” Ragan, two sons, Jonathan Daniel Ragan, and Michael Elijah Ragan, of North Man-

chester. Brothers, Steve (and his two sons) of Tucson, AZ, Sam (Alice and one son) from Markle, IN and another son from Elgin, TX. A sister, Janet Mason Custer Burchett from Eugene, OR.

There will be no service until spring at the Maple Grove private family cemetery, where there will be a small, simple memorial.

## Charles L. Harlan

Charles L. Harlan, 102, of Wabash, died 4:10 am, Sunday. Funeral services 11:00 am, Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021, at Christian Heritage

Church, Wabash. Visitation will be 9:30 am – 11:00 am. Arrangements by Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service.

## Joyce Ann (White) Whitesell

Dec. 20, 1954 – Nov. 22, 2021

Joyce Ann (White) Whitesell, 66, of North Manchester passed away suddenly on Nov. 22, 2021.

Joyce was born on Dec. 20, 1954.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at the Myers Funeral Home Huntington Chapel, 2901 Guilford Street, Huntington, Indiana.

A celebration of life will be

held on Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021 following the visitation at 12:00 pm at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made out Myers Funeral Home for funeral expenses in care of Myers Funeral Home, 2901 Guilford Street, Huntington, IN 46750.

To sign Joyce’s on-line guest book visit [www.myersfuneralhomes.com](http://www.myersfuneralhomes.com).

## HOLCOMB

From page A1

service to citizens is what, not only I question, but objected to.”

Holcomb said he supported private employers deciding to require vaccinations, but not the government.

“Businesses may choose to go down that route. Employees have the opportunity to say, ‘Then I’m out.’ So be it. And they have to make that business decision of that risk versus reward of, ‘Is it worth it? Can we afford to be down if so many walk off the line, so to speak?’ But other employees are saying, ‘We need this too. They want to feel safe as well,’” said Holcomb.

Holcomb said he recommended vaccinations, even while opposing federal mandates. He said the science was “compelling” and that the vast majority of those hospitalized were unvaccinated.

“If you choose as an individual not to make wise decisions, in this case getting vaccinated, then you fall into the 95 percent,” said Holcomb. “Our hospitalization census numbers now are at all-time high.”

### Continuing the state of emergency

on Wednesday, Nov. 24, Gov. Eric Holcomb said he planned to extend the public health emergency for another 30 days while legislators meet at the Statehouse to determine the next steps.

On Thursday, Nov. 30, Rep. Craig Snow, R-Warsaw, announced that he was co-authoring legislation to help end the statewide public health emergency “and protect Hoosier workers.”

House Bill 1001 would allow Holcomb’s state public health emergency to expire by ensuring Indiana could continue receiving the same federal reimbursements for SNAP and Medicaid, and maintain the state’s ability to hold voluntary community vaccination

clinics.

Snow said the legislation filed Monday, Nov. 29 at the Statehouse would also require businesses to accept medical and religious exemptions, if they require the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment.

Then, on Friday, Dec. 3, Holcomb signed Executive Orders 21-31 and 21-32 to continue the public health emergency and the executive order for provisions that address the impact of COVID-19.

Murphy said all directives in executive orders which have continued throughout the public health emergency will expire on Dec. 31.

Holcomb said with all the discussions of ending the state of emergency, he was not considering another lockdown or similar measures going forward.

“I think we’re in a different place. We look at this every day. What do we need tools to respond to COVID-19 as it is? No matter what the variant,” said Holcomb. “What we focus on is, ‘Do we have the tools we need to respond to the facts on the ground and assist locals?’ Because that’s where the rubber hits the road and assists these hospitals that are being overrun.”

Holcomb said the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and Indiana National Guard have 13 strike teams in long-term care centers in other hospitals.

Holcomb said they were planning on adding seven more of these such teams. we’re going to add seven more.

“You have to respond on the ground with the resources you need to play some defense if folks aren’t taking it upon themselves to play offense and get vaccinated,” said Holcomb.

### Teacher pay

The state budget deal announced in April by Holcomb and GOP legislative leaders will increase school funding by about 4.5 percent each of the next two years. That is

more than double what budget writers proposed earlier this month before new projections showed state tax collections should bounce back stronger than expected from the pandemic recession.

Legislative leaders said the budget plan will cover the \$600 million a year in the additional money the governor’s teacher compensation commission found was needed to significantly boost Indiana’s lagging teacher pay in comparison to nearby states. The bill directs school districts to submit explanations to the state if they aren’t able to set a minimum teacher pay of \$40,000 a year.

The deal includes a contentious expansion of the state’s private school voucher program by raising income eligibility for a family of four from the current roughly \$96,000 a year to about \$145,000 for the coming school year, potentially boosting participation by one-third to about 48,000 students.

Public schools officials and teachers unions have opposed that expansion, arguing that its projected cost of at least \$125 million over two years would consume too much of the K-12 education funding increase.

But the \$3 billion infusions of federal relief funding and a projected \$2 billion more than previously expected in state tax collections over the next two years seems to have let Republican leaders go ahead with the voucher expansion and give \$13 million toward a new program allowing parents to directly spend state money on their child’s education expenses.

“Locally those teachers’ salaries are bargained all over the state of Indiana so it’d probably be easier if you said, ‘State we want to you take over education and start determining teacher salaries.’ We don’t hear that in this building at least I don’t and the legislators that I work with on a day in and day out basis don’t hear that either,” said Holcomb.

Holcomb said the recent

budget deal amounted to “tremendous progress.”

“We’ll have another budget session in 2023 where we will be taking into consideration this session as well those big fiscal tag items: health care spending, education spending, energy costs, all kinds of things that have a fiscal attached to them in the budget session,” said Holcomb.

Holcomb said he and other leaders would be looking to the state budget forecast due Thursday, Dec. 16.

“We’ll see the picture of going forward and then yes we’ll absolutely talk about how those dollars get allocated in the next budget,” said Holcomb. “Every single person that works in this building will be watching between this budget where we threw another billion on top to see if it got to teachers. And that will also help inform, I don’t want to speak for anyone, but that’ll help policy-makers. That’ll help inform them on, did it get there or not?”

### Redistricting

In the wake of the 2020 Census results, Indiana, like states around the country, has just completed its redistricting process.

Holcomb said he thought the maps which resulted were fair and equitable to voters.

“I thought that at the outset only because I’ve seen this occur a couple of times around this process and building,” said Holcomb.

Unlike other states, Indiana does not use an independent commission to draw its districts. Holcomb said he opposed changing Indiana to that sort of system.

“That’s a legislative duty. They have to act constitutionally or they will get challenged. There’s a number of states in the country, I think 10 in the country that are being challenged. Indiana to date is not one of them because they pass constitutional muster or scrutiny,” said Holcomb.

Holcomb said removing politicians from the legislative process was “easier said

than done.”

“If the commission can’t get it right, it’s going to come back to the politicians. That’s happening right now. Then you see these commissions where they say these individuals are non-partisan. Maybe they were former governors. Did they just forget they were partisan?” said Holcomb. “I’ve always said they ought to be per the constitutional requirements, compact districts. You shouldn’t be going across lines. People in their neighborhoods should be intact and kept together. You ought to use technology to your advantage. Because you can spit into, you’ve got supercomputers now and they can do a lot of the hard work and I think that’s why we were able to be pretty efficient and then you can do the smell test or the sight test and just look and see. When you look at the maps, districts in Indiana and you look at Illinois that some hold up as a model, not even close. I think that the case will be determined hopefully not in a court of law, but if it doesn’t make it to a court of law that says all you need to know.”

### Cannabis legislation

Despite all this change in neighboring states, Indiana still does not allow either recreational or medical marijuana.

However, in 2017, Holcomb signed legislation allowing CBD oil with less than 0.3 percent THC for the treatment of epilepsy. In 2018, Holcomb signed another bill allowing the same for any purpose.

In November, the Indiana Democratic Party announced its full support for the effort to legalize recreational cannabis across the state. Rep. Sue Errington, D-Muncie, is crafting a cannabis infrastructure bill similar to the one she presented last year.

Holcomb said with marijuana still being listed as a Schedule I drug federally, he didn’t “pick laws to uphold and ignore.”

“It is still federally illegal. First things first, change that

law. Now, then states truly I would say are put in the hot seat of saying now you can act accordingly or legally. You can’t do that now. There might be some readers out there that might want me to ignore another law,” said Holcomb.

Holcomb said he wanted to see the results of more research on the medical benefits of cannabis before moving forward.

“I want this for medicinal uses to be researched just like Robitussin, just like aspirin, just like penicillin, just like the FDA gets involved in every single one. Not say, ‘Marijuana is different. Marijuana is different. Believe me, it helps.’ Well, some people might say a six-pack of Budweiser helps too. I want the medical research,” said Holcomb. “I’ve even said while you’re talking about changing the law on the federal front, we’ve got Purdue University, best ag school in the country. We’ve got Indiana University, best (medical) school in the country, they’ve agreed to do some of the research. The real research. Not the little that’s been done or some European study or some focus group of 10 people in some neighborhood.”

Holcomb said he was “not motivated or compelled by, ‘There’s a lot of money in it.’”

“I’ve talked to enough governors in other states that say that the amount of revenue that comes in is offset by the social services that you need to then address or the insurance rates or the business community talking about folks, the impact that it has on work ethic down the road and how you measure that. Drivers, etc. There’s a lot of policy discussion that needs to happen for sure state by state by state. But right now the states that have ignored it and said carry on, they can’t go deposit their money in a bank because the bank doesn’t recognize them as a legal business. How about we do it legally? That’d good by me,” said Holcomb.

*Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at [rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com](mailto:rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com).*



## Wabash Track Club participates in Jr. Olympic CC Championships

By ROY CHURCH

PARIS, Kentucky — The Wabash Track Club “ran with the big dogs” here Saturday and finished 13th.

On the day after deadly tornadoes ripped through the southwestern part of the state, the 13-14 age group team competed in the 2021 USA Track & Field National Junior Olympic Cross Country Championships in Paris, a town located just northeast of Lexington.

Teams from across the U.S. (Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, Florida, New Jersey, Georgia, Arkansas, Idaho, Arizona, Wisconsin, Texas, Tennessee, Washington, Illinois, North Carolina — to name just a few) descended on Kentucky looking for team titles and/or personal-best times.

Wabash won the 2021 state title one month earlier in Noblesville and, after skipping the USATF Regional in Shelbyville, defended their title by defeating the other Indiana teams in the field Saturday.

There were 27 teams in the 13-14 boys age group event.

Thomson Training from nearby Louisville won the title with 84 points and North Idaho XC was runner-up with 92. Wabash Track Club finished with 333 points.

Drew Guenin-Hodson again led the Wabash squad across the finish line. He took 58th place in 15:28.2. Isaiah Cordes was next in 119th in 16:05.6 and Bobby Shull was 123rd in 16:06.7, despite spraining his ankle out on the muddy 4K course.

Ezra Church was 152nd in 16:29.7 and Caidan Burchett was 203rd in 16:58.5 out of a field of 375 runners.

As far as team scoring went — taking out the unattached runners — the Wabash boys finished 30th, 61st, 62nd, 79th and 101st, respectively.

Vincent Recupero of the Rain City Flyers, out of Seattle, won the individual honors in 13:59.4.

“It was a hilly, muddy course and very windy,” said Jared Cordes, father of Isaiah, former Northfield and Wisconsin standout and one of the team’s organizers. “The entire field of runners finished one minute or more slower than their seed times.

“With a large number of fast runners on a muddy and relatively narrow course, it was hard for the boys to get off the starting line fast enough to avoid being stuck in ‘traffic,’” he added. “They all managed to move up nearly 100 places after the 1-mile mark.

“Bobby (Shull) sprained his ankle at some point in the race and wasn’t able to finish as strong as he normally could,” the elder Cordes said.

“They were the top team from Indiana. The Carmel Distance Project was 18th and Indiana Track (Bloomington) was 25th” with much larger teams, Cordes noted.

With thousands of young runners and teams from across the country, “it was a great competitive experience for the boys. Hopefully, these races have helped inspire the boys to continue their training through the ‘off-seasons.’ They are a talented group,” Cordes concluded.

Also running for the Wabash club was Jonas Church. He finished 79th in 20:53.16 out of a field of 103 in the 15-18 boys 5K event.



Provided photo

Drew Guenin-Hodson again led the Wabash squad across the finish line. He took 58th place in 15:28.2.

## SOUTHWOOD JV BOYS BASKETBALL BEATS EASTERN 54-13 ON SATURDAY



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

Southwood’s Blayne Hamilton, no. 24, and Randy Boone, no. 40, apply a stingy defense on their Eastern Comet foes during junior varsity action Saturday evening at SHS.

## SOUTHWOOD VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL DFEATS EASTERN 64-53 ON SATURDAY



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

Southwood’s Nathan Lehner, right, drives against the Comets’ Trever Crabtree during varsity action on Saturday evening at SHS.

# NEVER A DULL MOMENT



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## Wabash Plain Dealer

Shining light on Wabash County since 1859.



The Wabash Plain Dealer will not be publishing its Weekend Edition on Saturday Dec. 25, 2021 and Saturday Jan. 1, 2022 since USPS does not deliver mail on federal holidays.

We will, however, publish those Weekend Editions on Friday Dec. 24, 2021 and Friday Dec. 31, 2021.

The office will be closed Dec. 24th and Dec. 31st to allow our employees to spend time with family.

Obituaries received by normal deadline times on Thursday Dec. 23, will appear in Friday’s editions. Obituaries received after deadline Thursday and through the weekend will be published in the next available edition.



# Winter sports 2021-2022

## SOUTHWOOD GIRLS JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL



Front row (left to right): Aubree Huffman, Courtney Finney and Riley Thomas.  
Back row (left to right): Aaliyah Dyson, Riley Wilcox and Hannah Garrison.  
Coaches Kenneth Norman and Rod Cole.

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

## SOUTHWOOD GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL



Front row (left to right): Carrie Collins, Sarah Perez, Makenna Younce, Ella Hauptert, Alaina Winer and Lili Combs.  
Back row (left to right): Bailey Wyatt, Quinn Claussen, Macy Barney, Aleia Sweet and Meredith Norman. Coaches Kenneth Norman and Rod Cole.

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

## SOUTHWOOD VARSITY WRESTLING



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

Front row (left to right): John White, Hayden Jones and Bryant Pattee.  
Back row (left to right): Ayden Stouffer, Braxton Worthington, Logan Hiner and Head Coach Cary Hammel.

## SOUTHWOOD BOYS ‘C’ TEAM BASKETBALL



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

Front row (left to right): Carson Smith, Jackson Smith, Quinton Coe and Logan Robberts.  
Back row (left to right): Landon Mitchell, Cameron Hutch, Duke Sparks and Ryan Deeter.



# SOUTHWOOD BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL



**Front row (left to right):** Derrick Smith, Nathan Lehner, Isaiah Sutton and Caleb Wyatt.  
**Back row (left to right):** Blayne Hamilton, Randy Boone, Jason Oprisek, Will Winer, Dylan Stout, Cole Winer and Kaden Rody.

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

# SOUTHWOOD BOYS JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL



**Front row (left to right):** Caleb Wyatt, Keaton Metzger and Jaret Denney.  
**Back row (left to right):** Dean Elzy, Dalton Barney, Randy Boone and Blayne Hamilton.

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

# NORTHFIELD BOYS BASKETBALL ‘C’ TEAM



**(Left to right):** Luke Haupert, Fisher Howard, Jarret Faust, Parker Oswalt, Blake Aderman and Eli Bone.

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

# NORTHFIELD BOYS JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL



**Front Row (left to right):** Jaden Baer, Carter Rodgers, Tristan Hoffman, Easton Shaw and CJ Long.  
**Back Row (left to right):** Ryland Miller, Noah Burkhart, Kamden Carpenter, Issac Burkhart and Kody Stambaugh.  
**(Not pictured: Head Coach Matt Brown.)**

Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer



## NORTHFIELD BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front Row (left to right):** CJ Long, Dillan Tomlinson, Jaxton Peas, Noah Burkhart, Kody Stambaugh and Tristan Hoffman.  
**Back Row (left to right):** Kamden Carpenter, Paul Treska, Kaleb Krom, Jake Halderman and Eli Kroh. Head Coach Rex Reimer.

## NORTHFIELD GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front Row (left to right):** Ainsley Dale, Jaycie Krom and Camryn Kuhn.  
**Back Row (left to right):** Zaria Dunn, Addy Rosen, Hannah Holmes, Emily Pennington, Elli Baker and Eden Hoover.  
(Not pictured: Samantha Powell, Kierstan Rife and Coaches Brandon Baker, Hillary Eltzroth and Sydney Chamberlain.)

## NORTHFIELD VARSITY WRESTLING



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front Row (left to right):** Kenzie Griffin, Belle France, Asia Miller, Alexis Gates, Ella Gahl, Kameron Pratt, Trevor Shake, Dylan Osborn, Riyle McKillip and Paris Crull.  
**Second Row (left to right):** Coach Ed Shenefield, Maci Buzzard, Jaxon Martin, Jayden Goshert, Kameron Pratt, Mareus Myer, Eli Matter, Jared Holmes, John Clark and Coach Greg Gahl.  
**Top Row (left to right):** Coach Micah Higgins, Joseph Mitchell, Jordan Livesay, Ben Snyder, Tristan Barlow, Kevin Buzzard, Mason Osborn, Malachi Higgins, Cody Copeland, Coach Scottie Pennington and Coach Eric Kirtlan.

## WABASH JUNIOR VARSITY CHEERLEADERS



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Left to right:** Kaedance Corn, Trinity Dalton, Kizie Sarll and Paige Arrowood.



# WABASH VARSITY CHEERLEADERS

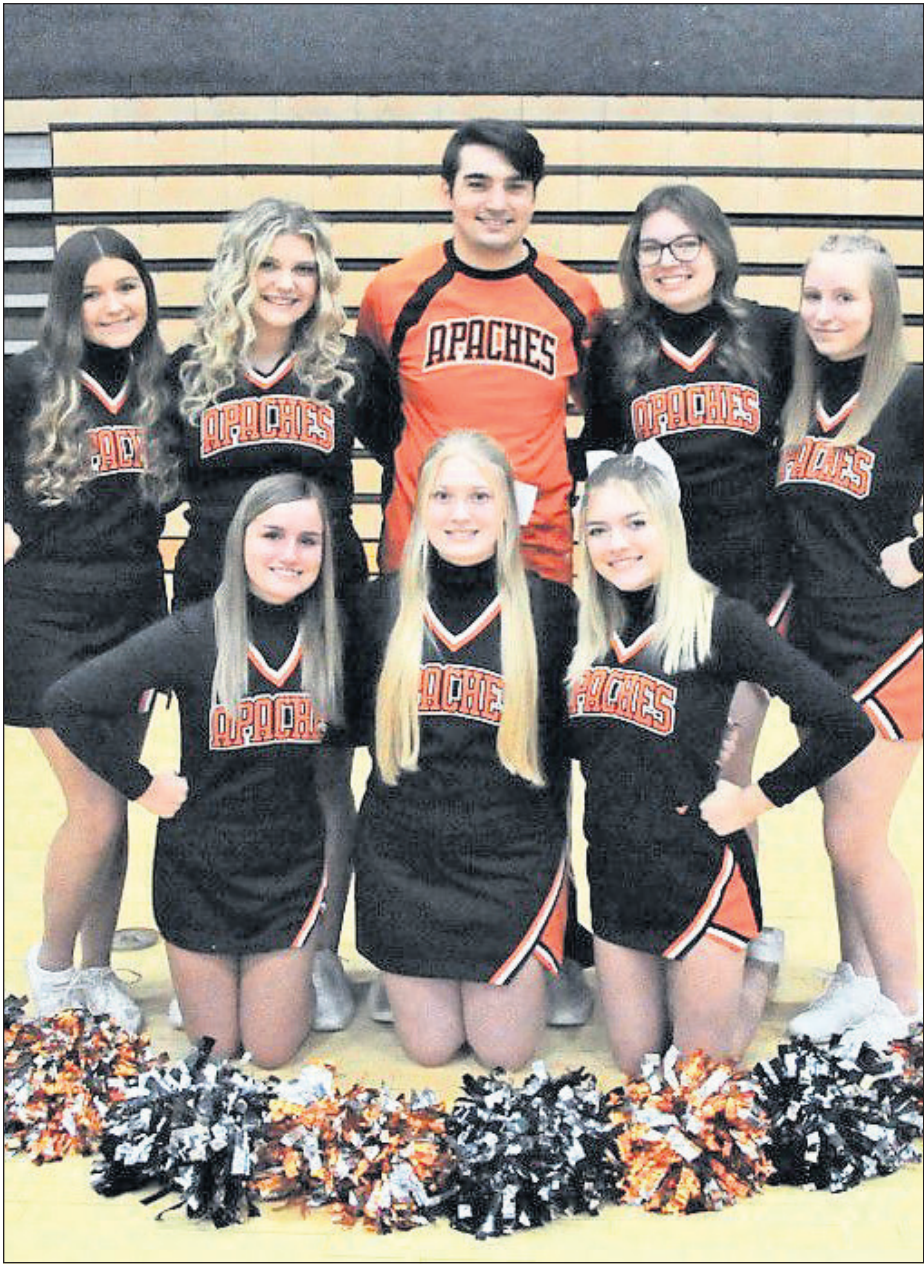


Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front Row (left to right):** Khloe Schuler, Karigan Long and Emilee Harrell.  
**Back Row (left to right):** Kylie Berryman, Torri Booth, Brenden Rowan, Haiden Lehman and Nevaeh Mettler.

# SOUTHWOOD VARSITY CHEERLEADERS



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front row (left to right):** Abby Fouts, Rylee Barney and Maddison Hunter.  
**Second row (left to right):** Ava Freeman, Kinzie Stouffer, Izi Wagoner and Aliisa Pinta.

# SOUTHWOOD JUNIOR VARSITY CHEERLEADERS

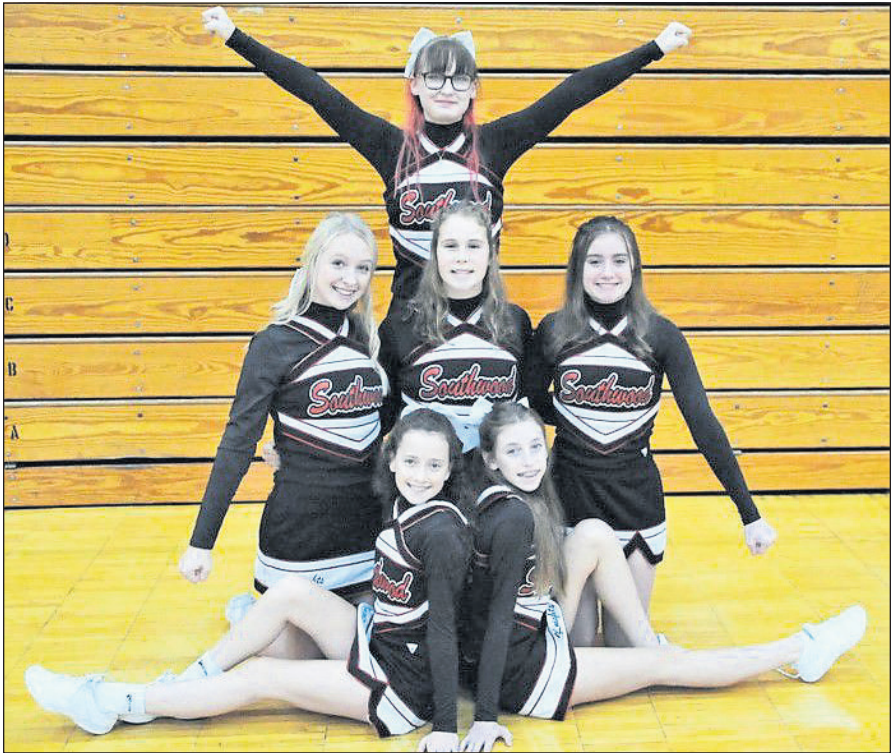


Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front row (left to right):** Brylee Wach, and Courtney Finney.  
**Second row (left to right):** Taylor Cavins, Zoey Gaylourd and Jordan Hartline.  
**Standing:** Makenna Snow.

# MANCHESTER JUNIOR VARSITY CHEERLEADERS

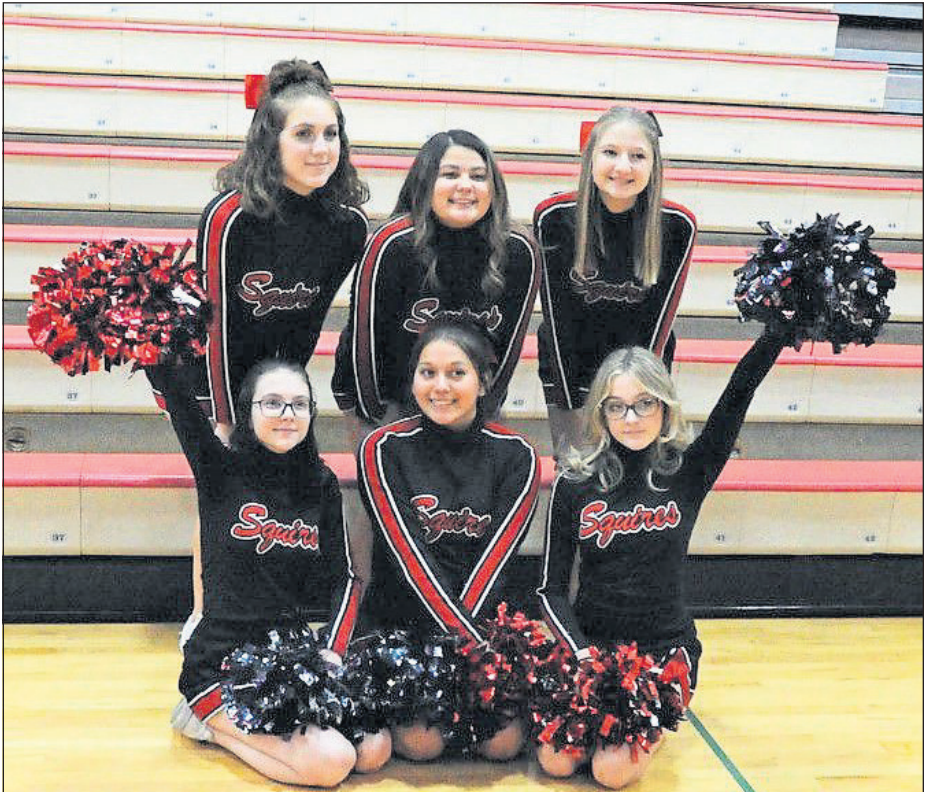


Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Front row (left to right):** Abby King, Alisia Hunt and Kaitlyn Sulkey.  
**Back row (left to right):** Hannah Shepherd, Isabella Luevano and Katlin Hudson.

# MANCHESTER VARSITY CHEERLEADERS



Photo by Greg Dannacher / Plain Dealer

**Left to right:** Catrina Newell, Sarah Hall, Carleigh Blevins, Erika Yard and Presley Bradley.



# Couple deal with cracks in their relationship

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been with my boyfriend for almost five years. We don't live together but we see each other every other day. Recently we had an argument about him following girls who show their butts on Instagram. This is not the first time I have asked him to delete the pictures; it's the third, actually.

Dear Abby



Every time I call him on it, he claims he just scrolls through them, but he gets mad at the same time or insists he doesn't pay any attention to them. He promises to unfollow them but never does. I also feel really insecure because when we first started seeing each other, he made a comment about wanting to pay to get my butt enhanced. What should I do? – Bothered By Butts

**DEAR BOTHERED:** Perhaps you should spend less time looking at his cellphone. If your boyfriend is caring, faithful and treats you well, you may have to learn to deal with your insecurity. Many men look at pictures on the internet and it's not a threat to their relationships.

That said, however, if your boyfriend's ideal woman is one with a prominent posterior, you may not be The One for him. And regarding his comment about having yours enlarged – of course, that would be your choice, not his, so don't be coerced. And, please, be aware that unless cosmetic surgery is done by a board-certified physician, the results can be unfortunate. It's also very expensive and the procedure is not "minor" surgery.

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband and I have been together for 16 years and have two little boys. Since we were young we have wanted tattoos, but we couldn't afford them and I couldn't decide what kind I wanted. Recently, the subject came up again, and I decided I'd get one that symbolizes my motherhood.

At first, my husband seemed all for it, but then he started joking about where his name would go on it. I responded that his name would never be part of my tattoo because it would be about being a MOM. I also said I don't plan to get a tattoo of him because, although I know we'll grow old together, if something happened to him, I'd be stuck with it forever.

He was hurt by that remark and now thinks I'm questioning our future together. Mind you, his tattoo has nothing to do with me or our kids, and I'd never ask him to do that. Now he's pushing me to "honor him" in a tattoo. I still feel strongly about the "mother" ink being my one and only. Should I add his name, or is a tattoo not the best route? – Feeling Guilty In Texas

**DEAR FEELING GUILTY:** What is driving your husband's "push" was the foolish comment you made that you would feel "stuck" (pun intended?) if he died and you had to wear his name forever. I would hope that you "honor" your husband every day of your marriage and vice versa.

Someone's name inked on your anatomy is no guarantee a relationship will last – living examples of which are the many celebrities who have had theirs removed or modified because their romances fizzled. If neither of you has gotten those tattoos yet, it would be better for your marriage if you both end this argument by skipping them.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

## CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 ATM code
  - 4 Centurian's V
  - 8 Propagated
  - 12 El Dorado treasure
  - 13 Greedy
  - 14 Glittery fabric
  - 15 Fishing gear
  - 16 Rabbi's place
  - 18 Genuine
  - 20 Rock's Fleetwood
  - 21 Air pump meas.
  - 23 Recipe qlys.
  - 26 Synthesizer inventor
  - 29 See-through fabric
  - 32 "Ugh!"
  - 34 Distinctive air
  - 35 Levin or Gershwin
  - 36 Montreal's prov.
  - 37 Ms. Hagen
  - 38 Perform
  - 39 Backless slipper
  - 40 Sanctioned
- DOWN**
- 1 Barbecue favorite
  - 2 – Cross
  - 3 Bump
  - 4 Goes without food
  - 5 Poison –
  - 6 French wine
  - 7 Gouda cousin
  - 8 Alliances
  - 9 Cleaning cloth

- Answer to Previous Puzzle**
- ACROSS**
- 10 Big bird
  - 11 Ruby or Sandra
  - 17 Airport exit
  - 19 Links letters
  - 22 Work by Homer
  - 24 Miff
  - 25 Racing shell
  - 26 Handle roughly
  - 27 "It Came From – Space"
  - 28 Take the podium
  - 30 Parts of ovals
  - 31 Do a banquet
- DOWN**
- 33 Tip over
  - 39 Ancient tale
  - 41 Mme.'s daughter
  - 44 In the wake of
  - 46 Egged on
  - 48 Barking noises
  - 50 Prickly sensation
  - 51 Vine valley
  - 52 Test
  - 53 Beard site
  - 54 German pronoun
  - 55 Prefix for cycle
  - 56 Library sect.
  - 57 Web addr.

Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at [QuillDriverBooks.com](http://QuillDriverBooks.com)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16			17			
18			19				20			
			21		22		23		24	25
26	27	28		29	30	31		32		33
34				35				36		
37				38				39		
40			41					42		
	43	44			45	46			50	51
			47		48		49		52	
53	54	55			56	57		58		
59				60				61		
62				63				64		

12-15 © 2021 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication for UFS

## SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

				5	7	4		
	6			2		7	9	
	9				1			
8	2			4				7
			7	8		2	1	
4				9				8
			4					3
	3	5		7				4
		9	5	1				

12/15

How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

1	7	8	6	9	4	5	2	3
3	2	6	8	5	7	4	9	1
4	5	9	1	2	3	6	8	7
8	9	5	7	4	2	1	3	6
7	6	4	3	1	9	8	5	2
2	3	1	5	8	6	7	4	9
5	1	7	2	3	8	9	6	4
9	8	3	4	6	1	2	7	5
6	4	2	9	7	5	3	1	8

## JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FOGOY

LTIPQ

ZNATAS

NFIEAL

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## THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

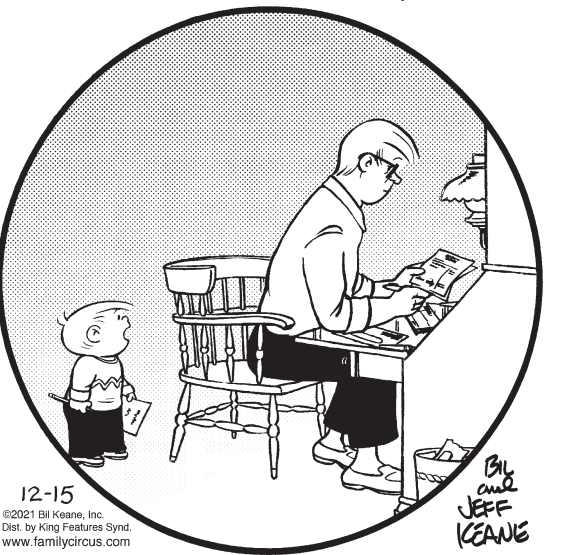
(Answers tomorrow)

IN

When the colt showed off his art skills by sketching his sister, it was – HORSE-DRAWN

## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



©2021 Bil Keane, Inc. Dist. by King Features Synd. www.familycircus.com

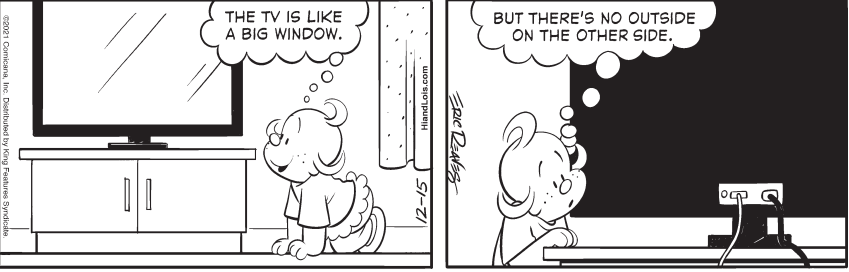
## BEETLE BAILEY



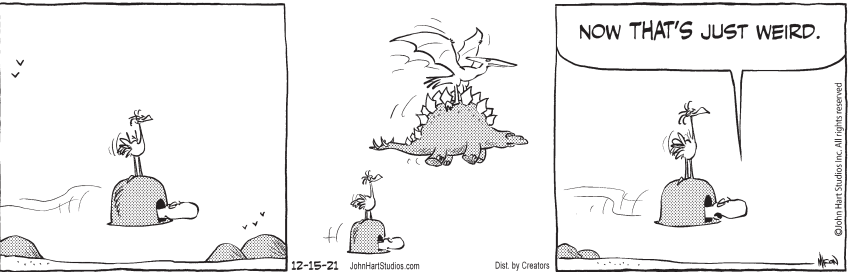
## BLONDIE



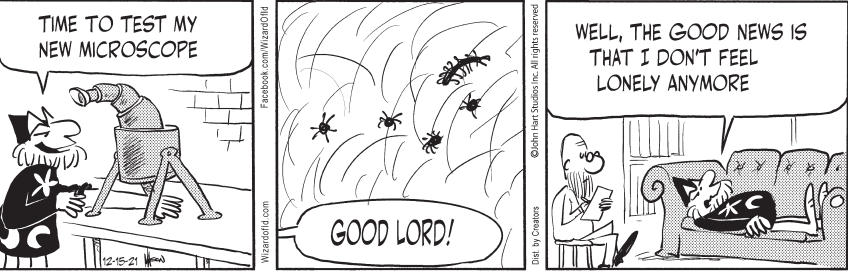
## HI & LOIS



## BC



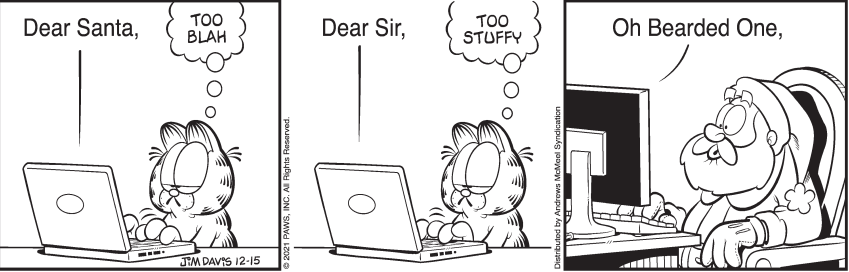
## WIZARD OF ID



## DILBERT



## GARFIELD



## FORT KNOX



## PICKLES

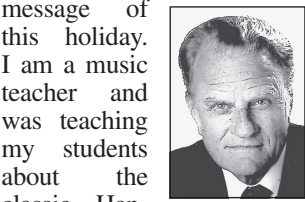


# Christmas is a real thing

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

**Q:** The war on Christmas is a real thing and it is hard to understand in America, a nation that once respected the message of this holiday. I am a music teacher and was teaching my students about the classic Handel's Messiah. A few kids were offended and I have been forbidden by the principal, who claims to be a Christian, to teach anything having to do with Jesus, yet He is the reason for the season. How can she be a Christian and deny history? – D.T.

**Billy Graham My Answer**



A: True Christianity does not deny any part of the Bible. For more than 270 years, audiences have listened to the magnificent composition performed by great choirs

and symphonies, especially during holidays. The text for Handel's Messiah was chosen by Charles Jennens, friend of the brilliant composer George Frideric Handel, lifted from 1 Timothy 3:16 for the epigraph: "God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory." When the oratorio was first performed in 1742, a member of the audience expressed gratitude to Handel for "pro-

ducing such a wonderful piece of 'entertainment.'"

"Entertainment!" Handel replied. "My purpose was not to entertain, but to teach them something." And for centuries now, Handel's message has resonated in hearts, proclaiming that Jesus is the Lord who died and rose again. A soaring soprano solo in the Messiah masterpiece combines Job 19 and 1 Corinthians 15 to proclaim: I know that my Redeemer liveth... for now is Christ risen from the dead."

## CELEBRITY CIPHER

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"H J G W M M V R N S G M H G X G C K W C H O V N Y R N U ' C T K W M M G U E G V N Y J L G M O W U R J H L Z O W H M H U E , C K W C H C ' L U N C H U C G J G L C H U E ." — R H J G T C N J I Y M H G C W V A N J

Previous Solution: "I am able to get up and dust myself off and keep moving forward. I'm very stubborn." — Rita Moreno  
TODAY'S CLUE: A sjenbe X



# Opinion

## SPEAK UP

How to contact  
your legislators:

**U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.**  
B33 Russell Senate  
Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
1-202-224-5623  
<http://young.senate.gov/contact>

**U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.**  
B85 Russell Senate  
Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-4814  
<http://braun.senate.gov/>

**U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-District 2**  
419 Cannon House  
Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
202-225-3915

**State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17**  
Indiana Senate  
200 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
1-800-382-9467  
[Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov](mailto:Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov)

**State Rep. Craig Snow, R-District 18**  
Indiana House  
200 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
1-800-382-9841  
[h18@in.gov](mailto:h18@in.gov)

To email any  
Indiana lawmaker,  
go to this website:  
[www.in.gov/cgi-bin/  
legislative/contact/  
contact.pl](http://www.in.gov/cgi-bin/legislative/contact/contact.pl)

## LETTERS GUIDELINES

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 99 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to [news@wabashplainedeal.com](mailto:news@wabashplainedeal.com) with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.



## DAILY SCRIPTURE

The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.

**Nahum 1:7**

# President Biden, tough words on China and Russia need to be backed with action

Just days before President Joe Biden convened a virtual summit of the world's democracies this week, China announced that it, too, is a democracy. It is a laughable attempt to grab a shred of legitimacy for a country engaged in the genocide of its Uyghur minority, crushing democracy and press freedom in Hong Kong, and intimidating democratic Taiwan with constant saber rattling.

Like China, other authoritarian regimes such as Russia and Iran go through the motions of democracy even as they stomp the opposition. All three hold elections that somehow never change who holds the levers of power.

The power of symbolism was on display Monday when the Biden administration announced a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in February in Beijing. No U.S. government official will attend, and neither will representatives of U.S. allies Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. Before America took action, China had already denounced the boycott and promised retaliation.

We hope more countries will join the United States and its allies in delivering a message to China that its

human rights abuses will not go unanswered. Maybe that's enough for the Olympic Games, which are themselves a symbolic affair intended to unite the world for a moment even as it is dangerously divided.

But in Eastern Europe, talk is not enough. There, 175,000 Russian troops appear poised to invade democratic Ukraine, where Russia has already incited rebellions on the nation's eastern border and carved off the Crimean Peninsula in 2014.

This week, President Biden spoke with President Vladimir Putin to deliver the message that a Russian invasion will be met with crushing sanctions and a beefed up U.S. military presence in Europe.

Clear communication with an aggressor is a good first step, but Russia has shrugged off sanctions before and has paid little price for its seizure of Crimea. Putin might well decide to seize the rest of Ukraine, despite Biden's tough talk.

That's why there needs to be action before Russia invades. Two steps the United States should seriously consider are reinforcing the Ukrainian military with defensive weapons

and exploring ways to stop the Russian Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline to Western Europe.

Washington has provided Kyiv a few dozen anti-tank missile launchers and hundreds of missiles, along with counterartillery radar systems, to make any Moscow offensive a more difficult affair. The Biden administration should now review its options to quickly do more before Russia completes its military preparations early next year.

And while working closely with European allies to expand sanctions Russia will face after an invasion of the Ukraine, the United States should also ask hard questions about the wisdom of allowing an authoritarian and aggressive Russia to have more leverage over Europe with a new pipeline, even if Russia only threatens to invade Ukraine.

Biden has inherited a world where authoritarian regimes are growing more aggressive while democracies grow more divided. His summit is a good step to change the dynamic, but to truly succeed he'll have to back tough words with resolute action.

*This editorial was first published in USA Today.*

# The 2022 forecast

It is economic forecasting season, so universities and consulting groups are offering their projections for 2022. I did so this week, continuing work from Ball State University that started a half century ago.

**Michael Hicks**



Over the last 50 years, a dozen or so Ball State economists have authored economic forecasts for east central Indiana, the state and the nation. This has long been part of the University's mission to state taxpayers, as well it should be.

The process of an economic forecast involves a lot of mathematics and a lot of common sense. The economy next year always looks a lot like last year, and the year before, and the

year before that. But, it also depends upon short-term changes, such as recovery from COVID, the cost of borrowing, the availability of workers and expectations about future spending by governments, businesses and households.

Differences in forecasts almost always hinge on assumptions about upcoming changes to these. If you assume interest rates will remain low, COVID will be modest and consumers ready to spend, then the outlook will be optimistic. If you assume the Fed will raise rates, that the pandemic will continue to hurt spending and fewer workers will re-enter the labor force, your projections will be far worse.

To perform these forecasts, we construct a series of mathematical equations. That isn't meant to be sophisticated, just transparent. Anyone framing a new home uses hundreds of equations, they just do most of it in their head. The transparency lies in looking at the joists and beams. If you screw it up, it is obvious. Not so with economists; we must write it down so our skeptics can see it, and more commonly, so that we can get better next time.

In some ways, 2022 is harder to forecast for two reasons. First, we remain in the grips of COVID, with new variants coursing through workplaces and schools. Second, we are winding down a large fiscal and monetary response to COVID that has reduced interest rates to near-zero and sent more than \$4 million of federal spending into the economy. Together, the forced savings caused by COVID surges and the stimulus put nearly \$2 trillion of savings into American households. How they spend those savings, and how COVID affects their decisions to spend will determine the path of the economy in 2022.

Today we are in the midst of a COVID surge that will kill and sicken tens of thousands of Hoosiers and hundreds of thousands of our fellow Americans in the coming months. That is a huge uncertainty that affects both the demand for goods and services and the supply of both. If the disease continues well into the spring, we should expect slowing demand for restaurants and accommodations, retail and other in-person activities. Given our experience in 2020 and early 2021, this could be significant. At the same time, the excess morbidity of COVID restrains labor supply in many ways.

COVID has killed 250,000 working age adults, and sickened far more. In terms of net loss of labor supply, we've seen nothing this bad since the Civil War. Then, there are the ripples of sorrow that accompany nearly 1 million unexpected deaths. Finally, there are many families who remain uncertain about the path of the disease. They may need someone at home to care for children who are quarantined from school or to provide support for a family member who continues to suffer from the lingering effects of the disease.

We are a nation of some 330 million people, so it is easy to see how 4 million to 6 million people who wanted to work in 2022 cannot because of COVID. This constraint on labor supply, which is so understandable, is enough to mute economic growth in 2022. And that is the preamble to my forecast.

The recovery from COVID has been reasonably robust. Americans returned to work in droves throughout 2020 and 2021. Even with continued risk, we saw amazing flexibility from our private sector businesses. From retail and restaurants to logistics and manufacturing firms, the U.S. economy has been astonishingly resilient. I remain in awe of how energetic and responsive American businesses have been regarding this disease.

The early complaints of labor shortages have been met by significant wage increases in some occupations. In the leisure and tourism sectors, which were hardest hit by COVID, wages for production jobs, such as wait staff, cleaning services and customer service, have risen by more than 10 percent this year. Still, many businesses find it hard to fully staff their operations and are going to need to adjust hours and services.

At the same time, federal spending on stimulus will taper off in the coming months. Families with big savings seem to have made large purchases, but savings rates are back down to historical levels. While strengthening, hints of inflation will cause the Federal Reserve to tighten money supply. Together, this means less demand for goods as consumers have fewer dollars to spend and borrowing becomes more costly.

This combination of conditions offers the essence of my forecast.

In 2022, I project that economic growth in the U.S. will slow from 2021 levels. This will look like a rapid deceleration of growth as our economy descends from quarterly GDP growth of 6.5 percent in the first half of 2021 down to growth rates in the 2.0 to 2.5 percent range in 2022. This will make the U.S. economy look more like the slower-but-sustained growth of 2018 and 2019 rather than the fevered recovery from the pandemic.

Here in Indiana, the economy has recovered about on par with the nation as a whole, though more of our recovery occurred in late 2020 than in 2021. This recovery has been broad, affecting every sector and generally offering employment opportunities to most Hoosiers. The recovery has left the Indiana General Assembly with \$0.5 billion in excess tax revenues. The coming year will see a return to more normal tax revenues, especially considering the effects of inflation on such things as pensions and healthcare of government workers.

All in all, 2022 will be a decent year for economic growth. It will also be a year in which the U.S. and Indiana economy return to the pre-pandemic levels of GDP, but with modestly smaller employment than in 2019. Goods and services will be more expensive due to inflation, but we are unlikely to see accelerating price increases.

Michael Hicks may be reached by email at [cberdirector@bsu.edu](mailto:cberdirector@bsu.edu).



# Time's short for the short session

Aren't you tired of all those predictably boring ceremonial solemnization stories in the news? The 5th or 10th commemoration of this, the 25th or 50th anniversary of that.

Wouldn't it be refreshing to see a remembrance in an off year?

So today, let us celebrate the 51st – nearly the 52nd – birthday of momentous events from the year 1970. And, in keeping with the spirit of the times, let's focus only on those things that have had a lasting negative impact:

The first Earth Day proclamation was declared, which, concurrent with the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, set the stage for Why Aren't We More Like Europe globalism and We're All Going to Die climate panic.

The Vietnamization plan of President Nixon was unveiled, letting us know that this country could undertake no commitment so enormous, so invested with blood and treasure, that we could not just walk away from when we got tired of it.

The Beatles broke up, and Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin both died at the age of 27. Grunge, punk and hip hop were waiting in the wings.

The Chicago Seven were found not guilty of conspiring to incite a riot, which started the normalization of urban mayhem, and the Public Broadcasting Service was born, a seminal event in the fitting of unpleasantness such as urban mayhem into the approved narrative.

The Indiana General Assembly voted to add every-other-year short sessions to its usual biennial gatherings, which ensured that even fiscally prudent, skeptical-of-authority Hoosiers could never escape the grasp of government.

The inclusion of that last item,

**Leo Morris**



some unintended, of every act. And, unlike the other acts, this one can easily be remedied, which is a dead horse a certain columnist has been beating for decades.

The framers of Indiana's 1851 Constitution, still cognizant of the country's founding principle of the "least government" necessary to protect life and liberty, reckoned that one legislative session every two years would be sufficient, except when the governor, determining that the general welfare required it, called a special session.

But in 1970, legislators decided a two-year budget was too fraught with uncertainties, so decided to enact the short sessions.

They were meant to deal only with emergencies and unexpected contingencies, but of course that didn't last. No tax ever goes away, and no public official is ever satisfied with the amount of government we already have. If 2022 is like previous short-session years, about 800 bills will be introduced, roughly 20 percent of them reaching the governor's desk.

Does the state really have that many "emergencies" to deal with? Do Hoosiers really need, 205 years after Indiana's founding, that much fine-tuning of their daily lives?

I say again, as I have every year in my journalistic history, let's stop the madness.

If there ever were a time to end the short session – at least

on a one-year experimental basis – this is certainly that time.

For one thing, state coffers are chock-full of cash. Tax receipts have been much higher than anticipated, and the government's rainy day fund has exploded. Furthermore, billions are coming in from federal pandemic and infrastructure measures. There is no possible emergency that cannot be handled.

For another, legislators have already staked their claim on autonomy, picking a big fight with the governor over whether he alone can call a special session. If lawmakers take the position that they can meet whenever they want, they can't balk at not meeting whenever they want.

So, come, on, senators and representatives.

Thanks to Covid and the policies you have embraced, Hoosiers have been able to take time off from work and family gatherings and eating out and shopping in public, and many of their children have even had a year off from school. Take your turn. Enjoy a break.

And give the rest of us a few anxiety-free months.

Let somebody's 51-year anniversary list in 2072 include this item:

■ "Indiana legislators informed columnist Leo Morris that his decades-long quest to end the short sessions would be the subject of a summer study committee." See also, "Horse, beating a dead."

■ Note: The phrase, not the posthumous Jimi Hendrix album, his 123rd, with that title.

Leo Morris, columnist for The Indiana Policy Review, is winner of the Hoosier Press Association's award for Best Editorial Writer. Morris, as opinion editor of the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, was named a finalist in editorial writing by the Pulitzer Prize committee. Contact him at [leoedits@yahoo.com](mailto:leoedits@yahoo.com).





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0200EMPLOYMENT

The Grant County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications for the 2022 Merit Deputy Eligibility List.

Applications may be picked up at the Grant County Sheriff's Administrative Office or at [www.grantcounty.net](http://www.grantcounty.net).

Applicant must have a valid driver's license at time of application. A physical agility test, written tests and an extensive background check will be required.

Completed application must be returned to the Grant County Sheriff's Office, 214 E. 4th St., Marion IN 46952 by 4:00 p.m. January 15th, 2022.

For additional information, please contact Capt. Ed Beaty at 765-662-9836 ext. 2144 or at [ebeaty@grantcounty.net](mailto:ebeaty@grantcounty.net).

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0900

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE  
Sheriff's File Number: 85-22-0001-SS  
Date of Sale: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 10:00 am  
Wabash County Newspaper: WABASH PLAIN DEALER  
Judgment to be Satisfied: \$109,794.20  
Cause No: 85C01-1911-MF-000959  
Plaintiff: MidFirst Bank  
Defendant: Tiffanie A. King and Brady E. King  
TO THE OWNERS OF THE WITHIN DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE AND ALL INTERESTED PARTIES  
By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me directed from the Clerk of Superior/Circuit Court of Wabash County, Indiana, requiring me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree with interest and cost, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder, at the hour of 10:00 AM of said day as listed above, at the Wabash County Sheriff's Department, 79 W Main St, Wabash IN, fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Wabash County, Indiana: Part of sub-divisions numbered Twenty-eight (28) and Forty (40) in Ewing and Hanna's Subdivision of Lots in the Charley Reserve. Township 27 North, Range 6 East, being more particularly described as follows: Beginning at a point in the centerline of Bond Street, 894.00 feet North of a point where the centerline of said Bond Street intersects the centerline of Stitt Street in the City of Wabash; thence North 89 degrees 41 minutes 20 seconds West, parallel with the South line of Bonbrook, Section "C", as recorded in plat book number 5, page 68, in the records of the office of the Wabash County, Indiana Recorder, a distance of 210.00 feet to an iron pipe; thence North 00 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds East, parallel with the centerline of Bond Street, a distance of 80.00 feet to an iron pipe; thence South 89 degrees 41 minutes 20 seconds East, along the South line of said Bonbrook, Section "C", a distance of 210 feet; thence South 00 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds West, along the centerline of Bond Street, a distance of 80.00 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 0.39 acres, more or less.  
Together with rents, issues, income and profits thereof, said sale will be made without relief from valuation or appraisal laws. This Notice shall also represent service of Notice of Sale of the above-described real estate upon the owners, pursuant to requirements of IC 32-29-7-3.  
Ryan Baker, Sheriff of Wabash County  
Township of property location: Noble  
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Property tax ID: 85-14-40-121-083.000-009  
Attorney: Alan W. McEwan  
Attorney Number: 24051-49  
Law Firm: DOYLE & FOUTTY, P.C.  
Contact Number: (317) 264-5000  
The Sheriff's office does not warrant the accuracy of the commonly known street address. It is the buyer's responsibility to research the legal description and associated legal filings.  
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NOTICE OF PROPOSED PRECINCT BOUNDARY CHANGES  
To the voters of Wabash County:  
You are notified that the Election Division of the Office of the Secretary of State of Indiana has determined that a proposed order by the Name County Board of Commissioners to change certain precinct boundaries within this county would comply with state law, and that the Election Division has notified the Commissioners that precinct boundaries may be established in accordance with the county's proposed order. The boundaries of the following existing precincts would be changed by the adoption of the county's proposed order:  
Roann Corp, Paw Paw Precinct  
Noble 6 & Noble 9  
Any registered voter of this County may object to the county's proposed order by filing a sworn statement with the Election Division. This statement must set forth the voter's specific objections to the proposed order, and request that a hearing be conducted by the Indiana Election Commission under the Administrative Orders and Procedures Act (Indiana Code 4-21.5).  
The mailing address of the Election Division is:  
Election Division of the Office of the Secretary of State, 302 West Washington Street, Room E-204  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2743.  
Any objection to the proposed order must be filed with the Election Division no later than noon, Indianapolis time on December 27, 2021. A complete copy of the county's proposed order is available for public inspection and copying at the office of the circuit court clerk and the Election Division.  
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HOMES for SALE



IN THE CLASSIFIEDS



From page A1

For the second year in a row, "Operation Reach Out," a "care shower concept created to encourage residents in Wabash County nursing homes and rehab facilities" will be collecting holiday cards for these residents who may be suffering from loneliness. The group will pick up the collection boxes at 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 17. Collection boxes are located at Wabash Hardware & Rental, 1351 Cass St.; Nordmann's Nook, 1106 Indiana 114, North Manchester; Joy Christian Book Store, 1317

The Marion Philharmonic Orchestra will hold the third concert of its 52nd Season, "Holiday Pops," at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17, at the Rediger Chapel and Auditorium at Taylor University in Upland. Doors will open at 7 p.m. This is a kid-friendly concert and an evening of entertainment for the whole family to enjoy. The special

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where gift checks are most commonly used. That list can be found at [www.growwabashcounty.com/giftchecklist](http://www.growwabashcounty.com/giftchecklist). Businesses that are not currently Grow Wabash County investors should not be accepting gift checks from customers. Gift checks may be purchased by emailing [marketing@growwabashcounty.com](mailto:marketing@growwabashcounty.com) or calling 260-563-5258. Gift checks must be paid upfront with cash or check, credit or debit card payments are not accepted for gift check orders. The last day to order gift checks will be Monday, Dec. 20 and gift check orders may be picked up no later

The American Red Cross has scheduled a local blood donation opportunity from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 21 at First United Methodist Church, 110 N. Cass St. To schedule an appointment, use the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call 800-RED-CROSS (800-733-2767).

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